

EXHIBIT O

Sharon Edri's murderers caught Kafr Tzurif Hamas cell behind 11 killings [Daily Edition]

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Lead Story. Box at end of text.

The IDF has located the body of missing Staff-Sgt. Sharon Edri, and broken up the Hamas cell responsible for his kidnap-murder and the killing of at least 11 and the wounding of 49 other Israelis over the past two years.

Two of the terrorists are being held by Israel, two by the Palestinians, and one is still at large. A sixth member of the cell, Moussa Ranimat, blew himself up, apparently unintentionally, at Tel Aviv's Apropo cafe last month, killing three women.

Ironically, the botched bombing led to the capture of the cell. Israel sought and received the help of the Palestinian Authority, which arrested two of the terrorists in the Palestinian-controlled part of Hebron and brought them to the West Bank village of Kafr Tzurif to show where they had buried Edri.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and the IDF brass, nonetheless, did little to hide their disappointment at the lack of Palestinian cooperation to foil terror attacks. "The PA is not working with all force and measures it has to foil terror and to fight against the foundations of terror," Mordechai told a press conference in Tel Aviv.

He said Israel would demand the extradition of the terrorists. OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan said the cell, sometimes referred to as the "Halhoul Cell," was responsible for the murder of 11 Israelis in a series of attacks since 1995.

Dayan said the IDF has arrested dozens of Palestinians since the Tel Aviv bombing and that 18 were arrested yesterday in Kafr Tzurif. According to the IDF, the cell was led by Ismail Ranimat, 25, a resident of Kafr Tzurif who studies in Hebron. He was jailed in 1993-1994 as a Hamas member.

Other members were Gamal Jibril Alhour, 27, of Kafr Tzurif; Rayid Salah Abu Hamid, 21, who carried an east Jerusalem ID and lives in Hebron; Ibrahim Abdallah Ranimat, 39, of Kafr Tzurif, who has been detained numerous times for membership in various terror groups; and Iman Mahmud Kafishe, 27, of Hebron, who was once jailed for membership in Hamas.

Israel is holding Abu Hamid and Kafishe, who told their interrogators they underwent military training and claimed at least five drive-by shootings, the Edri kidnap-murder, and planting the bomb at the Apropo cafe.

Among those arrested was Dr. Samir Khadi, head of Alia Hospital in Hebron and a former Hamas deportee, Kafr Tzurif residents said.

Troops converged on the village early Wednesday and barred journalists from entering. An IDF video released afterward, however, showed a handcuffed Palestinian prisoner leading soldiers to an olive tree and pointing downward to Edri's grave. Soldiers soon dug up the body and Edri's personal effects.

From the interrogation, it was learned that some members of the cell set out last September in a vehicle with Israeli license plates toward the Tzrifin army base with the express purpose of kidnapping a soldier. They said Edri was picked

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up near the base. One of them drew a pistol and shot Edri dead shortly afterward, when he suspected Edri knew he had been kidnapped by Arabs.

(Box) Tzurif terror

The Kafr Tzurif Hamas cell began its terror with drive-by shootings in late 1995 and moved on to kidnappings and eventually the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv last month, according to the IDF.

March 21, 1997 - Cell member Moussa Ranimat blows himself up at the Apropo cafe in Tel Aviv killing Yael Gilad, Anat Winter-Rosen, and Michal Midan-Avrahami and wounding 47 others.

September 9, 1996 - Kidnapping and murder of Staff- Sgt. Sharon Edri hitchhiking to his home in Moshav Zanoah. His body is buried near the village.

July 26, 1996 - Drive-by shooting near Moshav Tirosh killing Uri Munk, his son Ze'ev, and his wife Rachel.

June 9, 1996 - Members of the cell open fire on a car near Moshav Gefen, killing Yaron and Efrat Unger, of Kiryat Arba.

January 16, 1996 - Murder of Maj. Oz Tivon, a doctor, and Sgt. Yaniv Shimel, a medic when their car is attacked near Karmei Tzur. December 9, 1995 - Drive-by shooting near Neveh Daniel in Gush Etzion. Yonatan Moshitz and his daughter Lior are wounded.

November 18, 1995 - Opened fire on a vehicle driven by a resident of Jerusalem as it passed the village of Beit Omar. No one was injured.

[Illustration]

photo; Caption: One of Staff-Sgt. Sharon Edri's alleged killers points out the; Credit: IDF Spokesman

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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